

CALIFORNIA'S COUNTY JAILS

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► **Corrections realignment has increased focus on California's county jails.**

California has given its counties enormous responsibilities for corrections—including authority over many new types of offenders and parolees. Since realignment began in October 2011, county jails have had oversight over most non-serious, non-violent, non-sexual felons and parole violators. Both types of offenders now go to county jail—or face some alternative sanction—rather than going to state prison.

► **Counties operate a large and diverse number of jail facilities.**

California's jails fall into several different types, including court holding facilities, temporary holding facilities, and long-term facilities. All counties except Alpine operate long-term facilities, which hold most of the state's inmates. The reported cost to house an inmate in county jail varies widely but is on average \$114 per day.

► **County jails now house long-term inmates.**

Before realignment, the maximum stay in county jail was one year. Now that lower-level felons go to county jail, this practice has changed—there is no limit on the number of years that these offenders might serve. As of February 2013, county jails housed 1,155 inmates serving sentences of more than five years (roughly 1.4% of the average total jail population).

► **The jail population is largely male, awaiting or on trial, and either accused or convicted of a felony.**

Men make up the vast majority of the jail population (87%). More than 62% of inmates are either awaiting trial or have yet to be sentenced. Inmates held on either a felony charge or conviction account for 85% of the jail population.

► **After an extended period of decline, the jail population is now growing.**

After reaching a high of 84,275 inmates in September 2007, the monthly average daily jail population (ADP) declined quite steadily to a low of 69,406 in May 2011—a decrease of 17.6%, or 14,869 inmates. After realignment, the jail population began to rise and now stands at 80,864 inmates, a gain of 16.5% since May 2011.

► **As a result, county jail systems face crowding problems ...**

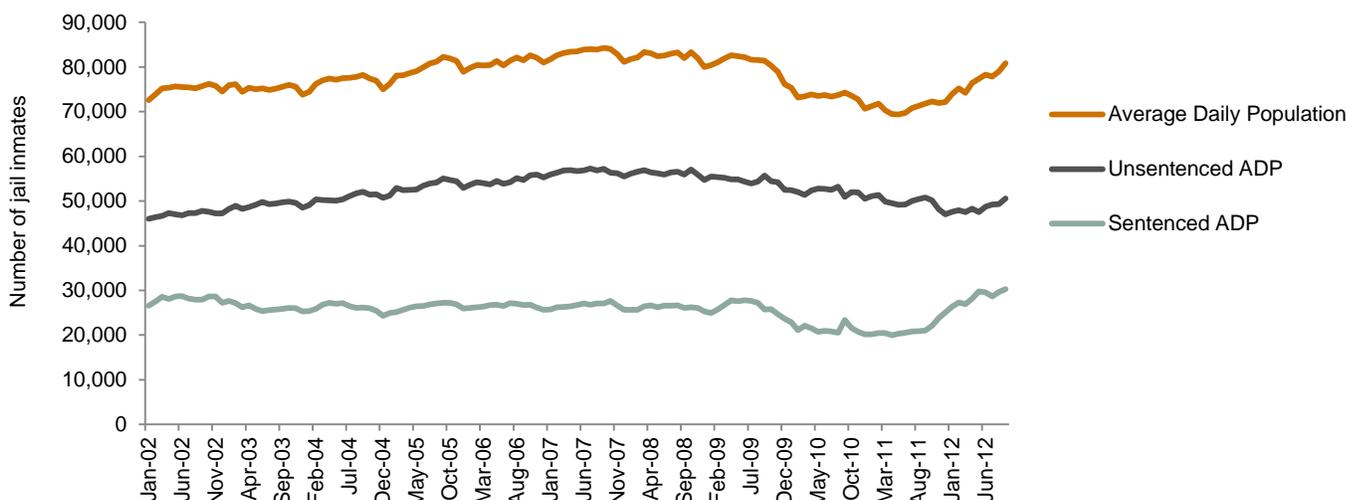
As of September 2012, the average daily jail population was about 3,954 inmates over the statewide rated jail capacity of 76,910 inmates, set by the California Board of State and Community Corrections. Twenty-one counties had an average daily population greater than their rated capacity. Additionally, 18 counties were operating under court-ordered population caps for at least one jail in their county. To address these capacity constraints, counties released 7,050 pre-sentenced inmates and 5,700 sentenced inmates in September 2012; up 410 and 2,119 inmates, respectively, from September 2011.

► **... but the state is providing assistance to expand capacity.**

California has made available \$1.7 billion for county jail construction. Twenty-one counties have received grants (under AB900) to construct a total of 10,926 new jail beds. Additional funding (under SB1022) could provide for the construction of up to 3,800 more jail beds, according to the Legislative Analyst's Office. Because construction costs account for less than 10% of the total cost of a jail over its lifetime, the financial burden of these expansions will fall primarily on the counties. The prospect of these future costs strengthens the incentives for counties to seek alternatives to incarceration.



County jail populations are rising, but still below previous peak



Source: Jail Profile Survey, January 2002–September 2012, Board of State and Community Corrections.

Note: Statewide figures include population numbers from Santa Ana Police Department.

More than 10,000 new jail beds are to be added statewide

Active in State Public Works Board (SPWB) process		Conditional award projects	
County	Number of beds	County	Number of beds
Calaveras	160	Amador	165
Kern	822	Imperial	232
Kings	252	Los Angeles	1,024
Madera (2 projects)	145	Monterey	288
Orange	512	San Joaquin	1,280
Riverside	1,250	Siskiyou	150
San Benito	60	Sutter	42
San Bernardino	1,368	Tulare	514
San Diego	1,270		
San Luis Obispo	198		
Santa Barbara	376		
Solano	362		
Stanislaus	456		
Total new beds	7,231		3,695

Source: AB 900 Phase I and II Status Update (January 2013) and State Public Works Board (SPWB) agendas through May of 2013.

Note: Project bed totals come from the January 2013 BSCC update, except for the updated total for Kern County. Active projects are updated through May 2013 SPWB meeting.

Sources: Jail Profile Survey 2002–2012; AB 900 Phase I and II Status Update–January 25, 2013; 2012 Survey on Average Daily Cost to House Inmates: Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). BSCC Rated Capacity by Facility; Survey of Long Term Jail Inmates–February 23, 2013: California State Sheriff’s Association.

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